



CALVERT

# *Calvert*, A Review of the Arts, Fall 1978

Editor-in-Chief, James M. Clash

Managing Editor, David Hall

Poetry Editor, William Gorski

Fiction Editor, Jack Garman

Art Editor, Libby Mikesell



**Cover by Sumle Edagawa Putman - *Urashima Taro***

© *Calvert*, 1978. Rights revert to writers and artists upon publication. *Calvert* is an independent student literary magazine published twice a year by Maryland Media, Inc. Address correspondence to *Calvert*, c/o Maryland Media, Inc., University of Maryland, College Park, Md. 20742.

*This issue is dedicated to Mark Parker.*

# Table of Contents

## Poetry

- 4      *Writer* Joe Yuhas  
5      *Canyon Song* Virginia Clark  
6      *Bridge* Jane O'Callaghan  
10     *Mirror, Mirror* Patricia Gayet  
11     *What the Lama Said* Patricia Gayet  
12     *Villanelle* Crispin  
19     *Symposium on Flower Delivery* David Gellner  
20     *Death Sonnet* Reed Whittemore  
21     *Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec* Marilyn Mell  
23     *Faces of Gravity* Crispin  
24     *Epileptic* Matthew W. Westbrook  
29     *Love Letter, 1944* Robert Trumbule  
31     *The Restoration and Progression of Absurdity in the  
EYE OF LOVE* David Hall  
32     *Elegy of the Impossible Memory* Saundra Maley  
33     [George Hevener] Saundra Maley  
39     *The Heroic Poet and Words to a Fellow Traveler* David Hall  
41     *Saint-Gaudens' Memorial to M. H. Adams* Mark Zeender  
42     *True Art* Michael Sobsey  
43     *Visiting the Family* Steven Barnes  
44     *Purgatory* Hastings Wyman, Jr.  
46     *Cycle Rewinding* William Gorski  
49     *Taipei* Ruthellen Quillen  
50     *Beast* Reed Whittemore  
51     *the multi monster* Paul A. Trimble  
52     *Turning Disease* David Dobler  
53     *Excerpts from the Memoirs of God's Secretary* Cathy London  
60     *I Am* Mary Ann McFadden  
61     *Poetry Four* Joy Dineen  
62     *Anomie* Warren Early  
64     *The Last Word on Literary Magazines* Michael Gentile

## *Fiction*

- 7        *The Ascent* William Gorski  
13       *Rerun* Lucia Keuroglan  
25       *Rain* Kathy Bearden  
35       *Of Another Breed* James M. Clash  
48       *He and She* James Crisci  
55       *Right of Passage* Gladys Sloane

## *Art*

- 3        *Insecta No. 1* Sumie Edagawa Putman  
9        *Breaking Through* Jim Wilson  
18       *String Hands* Jim Wilson  
22       *As Above, So Below* Peter Muldoon  
30       *O'Keeffe by Stieglitz 1919; [pos]* Heidi McLain  
34       *Baltimore 1977*, Randall Roberts  
40       *Untitled* Lynda Del Castillo  
45       *Untitled* Shirley Dow  
50       *Untitled* Shea Leifer  
54       *Untitled* Grace Liddy  
59       *Untitled* Randall Roberts  
63       *Blanche* Jim Wilson



Sumie Edagawa Putman, *Insecta No. 1*, etching, 9 13/16 x 13 15/16"

## Writer

This morning Writer awoke  
He was master of his own ceremony  
He felt fine, very much in his own world  
He did exercises He pulled his muscles into shape  
He relaxed on the floor  
                    on his back  
He thought about reading and writing  
The language is so important  
It alone separates us from animals  
                    from fucking dogs and snails--  
                    we have symbols  
We have symbols."  
He was happy  
Writer felt very profound

In the afternoon Writer realized "Nothing matters  
Nothing is at least  
something."  
Soon Writer's stomach ached  
He desired a nap  
He was glad to be gone

Writer awoke in happiness  
Evening fell on his day  
Night began  
Writer watched the ball game  
He felt very legitimate  
A true fan  
Writer was not bored

Writer fell into deep nostalgia after the game  
He listened to old songs  
He breathed others' smiles  
            high until early morning

Asleep at last  
Writer dreams  
            of smiles of travels of new ceremonies  
He awakes and forgets and begins  
to live it all  
again

## Canyon Song

I spend the morning stalking fossils, lizards  
amid the evening primroses and sand  
verbena in the desert-brown canyon.

Walk  
up the hill past the garden where lemons lie  
split in the dust, aging to ochre, and lost  
avocados ripen to pebbled black.

Go up  
to the house, sit on the porch edge, scrape my palms  
and thighs against warm brick.

Inside the house, voices.  
Lisbon Antigua plays again and again.

I study the magnolia tree, the cones dropped  
in the driveway, spilling seeds hard and shiny  
like red beads.

The Japanese gardener in  
white t-shirt and khakis half-smiles in silence,  
clipping the tall hedge flat.

Voices grow to shouting.  
After a time the gardener turns the valve;  
a chorus of water rains in symmetry  
on the grass too green.

Suddenly the front door  
opens; a man rushes out, then a woman.  
He reels through the water to a car,  
drives  
away.

She screams at air, falls in the driveway, trembles.  
My hands bleed.

The gardener trims the shrubs.

Lisbon Antigua.



## Bridge

They lived on a farm near Dungarven,  
Pat and Brigid Walsh.  
He loved company, and to chat  
of the world -- and her.  
She minded the house.  
She could kill a chicken, and then  
with bread, carry it in her apron,  
large as a white sea,  
up to a neighbor's house.  
"Many's the time she kept hunger  
off our backs," a father said,  
years later.  
She took in boarders, for pay  
or nothing:  
her little daughter cowered under  
the table when the priest bellowed  
in, looking for the mother.  
(he was a terror for beating  
the nuns, so the local story went.)  
It was her husband who gave the praise.  
Whenever there was need, he'd say,  
pride and love coining one phrase:  
"Bridge will do it."



# The Ascent

by William Gorski

THE TIRES rolled over the rubber ribbon with bells inside it. The boy jumped up in the car seat. He loved the sound of the gas station rubber bells announcing his arrival.

Shadows filled the car as his father pulled into the mechanic's garage. He left to talk to the mechanic while the boy remained within.

He looked out the windows. The smell of oil went through him like blood. It was a foreign odor, brewing and living in this dim room. A lamp hung from one corner of the ceiling like a dull moon. He could make out rags and wrenches and cylinders, tortuous and rusted shapes of metal postured along the walls. Bits of broken machines lit the concrete floor; glints of screws and silver hammers.

The calmness of the motionless metals settled over him. He was part of their silent arrangement. Yet that seeping smell and the darkness would not let the boy completely forget himself.

His father returned with the mechanic, whose face and clothes were as dark as the garage. He seemed like a man without windows, blending flawless with the smell and the metals. He brought his large face to the windshield and asked the boy if he wanted to go flying. The boy wasn't sure if he could trust his smeared face. He glanced toward his father, who was smiling and nodding his approval.

He shook his head excitedly. He was going flying. The mechanic flipped a switch and suddenly a single, fluid thrust lifted him through the air. He had no idea that cars could fly. Why hadn't his father taken him flying before? He thought maybe the wheels were expanding, circles widening and revolving through space. From this climbing height he watched the dimensions of the metal-strewn ground diminish.

As he floated near the ceiling in mid-air, the car halted its ascent. A drugged knocking of pipes and tools, metal on metal, erupted below his seat.

He stared far below at his father, standing with arms folded and a toothpick travelling along the crack of his lips. He had always looked up to those elbows and forearms that stood over his head like something powerful and menacing.

Now, from above, his father's arms seemed to be supporting his chest, as if it might collapse if he let them down. He stood clearing his throat and glancing about with disinterest. Something switched round in his looking down on that familiar man. Was he not now his father's father?

But he remembered his grandfather held that position of hierarchy. If his grandfather were here too, he would be father to them both. He imagined the whole garage filled with throat-clearing ascendants, their

collection of heads scattering in the dimness like dull nickels.

In his new world, up there, a restless need for some new father needled him. This dark high space was not completely comfortable. He wanted some form to stand over him.

He glanced at the lamp in the corner. It was not bright enough.

An electric humming jerked the car. He was descending into all those oil rags and the clankings of metal. He passed his father's face on the way down and was once again below him.

He kept secret the memory of those folded arms above. Now they could not menace him so much.

Yet this new taste of his formless, unknown father somehow did not mix with the smell of oil.

her  
He  
  
ose  
the  
  
uld  
not



Jim Wilson, *Breaking Through*, etching, 8 3/4 x 10 3/8"

## Mirror, Mirror

Some Pharoah gazed  
at your bronzeness  
and found it good.

The Venetians kept the method of your making  
secret.  
To reveal meant death.

You are here  
because Narcissus deified himself  
in your image.

Kings have annointed their ceilings  
with the cunning of your facets.  
They are gone. You endure.

You explain and prove us to ourselves.  
We will always need you.  
You never lie.

## What the Lama Said

Come.  
Sit beside me.  
Look into my eyes.  
Give me your hand.  
I will read you of delights  
that never cease.

This crease denotes fame.  
This one is a meeting  
with a dark stranger.  
The moons of your palm  
open like flowers  
: they will bring you an unexpected love  
at an inauspicious season.  
Take care.

Then there are the things  
which I cannot explain  
such as ecstasy  
or death  
because you do not yet believe  
in either.

## Villanelle

I've built and wintered by the light of hands.  
When seen as structure, given flame and weight,  
a man lends power to the place he stands.

I give the maker ground what it demands:  
strength of rhythm, river-fist, strength to hate.  
I've built and wintered by the light of hands.

What sight and slake have sheltered, wing intends.  
From man-hammer, man-hawk, learn stay and sate.  
(A man lends power to the place he stands.)

I am a brother to the breathing winds.  
Men's arms that can rage like storms to be great  
have built and wintered by the light of hands.

In bird-taken silence we are taught friends  
of feathers. Flesh that's striven to create  
a man lends power to the place he stands.

Made new by feel, alive to our own ends,  
we are the single eye of our struck fate.  
I've built and wintered by the light of hands.  
(A man lends power to the place he stands.)

# Rerun

by Lucia Keuroglian

I KILLED HER. Yes. Ten years ago today. No one understood then, and still no one understands. But I believe it; I know the facts; and I was the only one there.

We lived on East Hammersmith Street, the second house from the corner in a two story white frame built about the turn of the century. I remember that summer father and Dan had painted the shutters a taffy brown, and mother and I had enjoyed our roles as supervisor and attendant.

"A little to the left, Al," she would yell at father. "You're missing one of the edges. This has got to be the best paint job on the block." We laughed. For mom, everything we did or thought had to be the best or the most outrageous.

"Hey' pipsqueak!" my brother would call from the ladder. "Bring me the turpentine bucket and be careful not to spill on the grass, or you'll kill the ants."

"Sure!"

"Oh no, you don't," mother was behind me, "that's too heavy for you. Go get the rags instead. I'll bring this along."

We made the painting job last a week. It was easy enough; the weather was hot, muggy, humid and, during those evenings the smell of varnish and cleaners mingled with the charcoal smoke from our backyard as we feasted on sometimes raw, sometimes burnt hamburgers.

"Hey, Sal," and dad would give Dan and me a quick wink, "what you say tomorrow we exchange this ground round for steak?"

"That's an excellent idea, Allan," mom would answer right back. "I'll just tell Crammer's I want chopped sirloin instead."

Then the weather changed, and Dan started school again. He was older than me by eight years and was in high school now. He began acting differently and stopped playing the old games like Hide and Seek.

"Go hide yourself," he would say to me.

"Daniell! That's no way to..."

"But mom, he's just a baby."

I wasn't though. I would have been in the first grade except the doctors made me stay home that year. I suppose it was just as well; dad had begun to workevenings and weekends, and mom said that was good because it gave her a chance to teach me all the things I was missing from regular schooling; but I don't think so. During the day, while Dan was in classes or at football practice, mom and I would sit on the back



porch and she would read aloud the tales of the Arabian Nights or draw sketches of the different stars and planets. Sometimes she would describe the lives of other people: how da Vinci differed from Michelangelo, and Beethoven from Mozart. Then we made up this game; she would call out different names, and I would tell her who they were and what they did or vice versa.

"The Thinker."

"Rodin."

"Light bulbs."

"Edison."

"Phonograph."

"Macaroni. I mean, Marconi."

Although I always made the same mistake, mom would still laugh; her large frame would shake uncontrollably in the wicker chair that dad had built. I wondered whether he had ever heard mom laugh like that before. Then came the times when I would find her alone, rocking back and forth in place, clutching at her belly as if in pain, hardly aware that I was near. I learned to be quiet, then. I would stay close enough to her so that I could watch her, and yet be by myself. I pretended a lot, too. Sometimes I was a bird or a squirrel living in the jungle where hunters...

"Josh."

"Yeah, mom?"

"What you doing?"

"Nothing."

"You behaving?"

"Yes. I was just thinking like you was."

"Too much thinking's not good. We got to be active, too. How 'bout we do something to surprise daddy. Bake something maybe?"

"Sure."

Strangely, though, father was never home for those surprises. Whenever the mood struck mom to make cakes or pies, the only person who benefited was Danny. After supper, we would divide the dessert into thirds; and whatever we could not finish, mom would eat. Nothing was ever left for dad, and he didn't seem to regret it either. Eventually the baking stopped completely; he still did not come home very often; and mom began to slip in and out of her thinking times more and more.

As the weather grew colder my own health grew worse. The doctors explained to the family that I needed rest and a very strict diet. I had trouble breathing and Dr. Samuels gave me a little mask filled with air to breath through when my chest became tight or my throat blocked. For two months, once a week, mom and I would ride the bus into town to his office where he would listen to my heart and lungs. Then one afternoon when we arrived, father was seated in the waiting room. Soon after we had a nurse come and live with us, and she saw to it that I stayed in bed a good deal of the time. Mother was allowed to see me

only twice during the day: once in the morning, and once in the afternoon; and her visits were timed to thirty minutes. She would sit on the edge of the bed, and we would try and laugh and call out the names of people but it wasn't fun anymore. Nurse Morrison always interrupted us.

"Too much excitement's not good for his heart." How I wanted to shove that thermometer up her nose until I could feel it scrape her brains.

Often I could hear the two women arguing in the hallway below my room. The quiet voice of my mother would rise, shrilled and pitched with anger, yelling the two words I most wanted to hear: "You're fired." It did no good. The deep voice of the bear growled back the same line, "Mr. Rankins pays me, so only Mr. Rankins can fire me." The next time I saw father, I begged him to let the nurse go.

"Listen Josh. You don't understand. I know Morrison's not the greatest, but she's competent."

"Mom could..."

"No! Josh, your mother's sick. She doesn't have the training, the patience, the nerves..."

"No she's not. She could..."

"Joshua, that's enough. You've heard my answer. Sulk if you want. But I have something more important to discuss." I stared at him and said nothing; he was getting to be just like the bear. "In a week or so, Daniel and I will be leaving. My job's been transferred, and we'll have to find another place to live."

"Where to?"

"North. Outside Baltimore."

"I don't want to go."

"You won't have to for a little while. Not 'til Samuels says you're ready."

"What about mom?"

"She's known, and she's staying too. If she wants to come later, she can."

"Course she'll come."

"Yeah."

"Will we have to take the nurse?"

"That depends a lot upon you. If you get well enough then she'll stay behind with the garbage."

"Daddy!"

"Just joking, son. Don't be so sensitive," But I wasn't sure that he was.

I didn't miss father after he was gone, but I did Danny. Especially on Saturday afternoons, when he used to come home from the game still dressed in his uniform. He would bounce on the mattress, kick off his cleats, and describe all the things that had happened on the field, re-creating all the plays, and passes, and touchdowns, until Morrison would get so excited that she would tell him to leave. Then Dan would

become quiet all of a sudden and he would stare straight at her nose and say, "Go stuff it."

Danny had grown big, almost overnight, and Morrison looked as if she was afraid he would tackle her at any moment. I loved the way he got around her. With him gone, I began to watch more television. I hated the comedies and became fascinated by the old black and white horror movies: partly because they were funny in a queer way, and partly because I knew Morrison hated them. Then I added the westerns until—with careful timing—I could keep the T.V. going a straight twelve hours without watching any modern shows.

Christmas came and went.

On New Year's Eve Morrison wanted the night off and mom and I toasted ginger ale cocktails to Lombardo's 'Old Lang Syne.' Mom looked beautiful that evening. She wore a long maroon gown and the teardrop pin that Dan and I had given to her for her birthday; and, in the middle of the kitchen floor, she taught me how to waltz.

"Always remember to be relaxed," she said. "And don't be afraid to lead."

"But what if the girl..."

"A woman will always follow."

Balloons went off. "Happy New Year."

"I hope so, son."

In the two weeks that followed we heard from dad only once. He called to let us know that he had finally signed a lease on an apartment and that he would need to come back for some furniture. At first mom was happy, then sad; and Morrison became unusually nice to us. But I still wanted to cram a thermometer—

"Joshua, you remember, a friend can be someone you might hate now, but..."

"What's that mean?"

"Just remember."

Everything was wrong.

And here the memories begin to blur.

The reasons, the sequences are gone; only random details remain clear to me: the day—Thursday; the time—4:02 p.m.; a cold January afternoon. Morrison absent for something, into town maybe, or fired. Mom and I alone again. I am in my room, but I come down for some reason. Perhaps I hear her calling; perhaps I am just thirsty. I wear no slippers because the carpet is warm, but the kitchen tile is cold. I yell, "Mom, I need a glass." No answer. The glasses are kept high. I could climb but am not supposed to. Still no answer. I yell again and walk toward the den. I hear the T.V. —an old "I Love Lucy" show:

"That's Vita Meeta Vegimin"

Mother lies on the couch. She is pale.

"Mom."

I hear a groan.

"Mom!"

She mumbles "medi", and I see that her bottle is empty. I run back up the steps to the bathroom where I know she keeps a second bottle. I call a neighbor on the phone. No answer. I try Dr. Samuel's office. The receptionist is dumb.

"I need help!" I am screaming.

"The doctor has a patient. He will return the call." I run down the steps.

"Mom. Ma. Please sit up. Here." I grab at the shoulders of her dress to shake her. It tears. I slap her face. She is warm.

"Mom!" I begin to heave. I can't breathe. Upstairs on my pillow is my mask; there is no air here. My tongue burns and dries and feels like it sticks to my mouth. I hear someone in the room talking, I am sure, I know that everything will be all right, if only I could scream, air— and then I understand the words: "And so tasty, too. Just like candy."



Jim Wison, *String Hands*, pen and ink on paper

# Symposium on Flower Delivery

(for Dan McGarry)

The flowerman drives in his truck with a radio.  
Immune to the smell of flowers, he blows his horn  
and curses some stupid driver. Justly so.  
A patient may die before delivery.

At the hospital his fear comes true.  
The \$13.98 bouquet for room 803 is too late.  
In sympathy, he leaves a pamphlet on funeral arrangements.  
He boo-hoos tears on his flowers  
which keeps them moist while he returns to the truck.

Once back, he lights a cigarette  
and mindfully tunes in the radio.  
His next delivery, a \$16 rose  
for somebody's brokenhearted lover.  
So many times he has taken the blooms over his head,  
with cries, "He's no good. I'll never speak to him again."  
The door may slam,  
but he must reknock;  
often he sprays the flowers with lye,  
to get the sought after signature.

Heading for home in his 68 sedan,  
he remembers his day as a missionary.  
Constantly battling sorrow and pain,  
bringing light and his truck to places of darkness . . .  
He chucks a cigarette out the window  
and runs several red lights.

## Death Sonnet

If all the world's books were to say it is it would still be no bargain,  
This death. I have tried it and found it swill.  
Whoever they are who know more than I do declare it an acquired taste.  
I know only that the taste has made me well.

It's a matter of liking or not liking and I'm not like liking.  
It's a matter of whether one goes with the crowd or is special.  
And though I'm admittedly no authority on the single life  
I'm exploring it instead of nothings communal.

Cheers for the defective defunctive who wriggles and defecates,  
And the hypochondriac with pill case feeling a cramp.  
Down with stoics and priests and their recrudescant rites  
Of passage into the damp.

When the pious ones call the roll and the last trump blow  
I would like to be listed as too disturbed to go.



## Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901)

One slight stumble on a polished floor  
changed child's grief to adult agony.  
A broken thigh bone that would not heal  
stunted your legs, shrunk your life  
to a four foot six inch frame.

Dragged by a boot-hook cane,  
you waddled, not waltzed,  
through the dust and must of bar rooms.  
Growing jealous of wild motion,  
you stilled it in the swirl of paint.

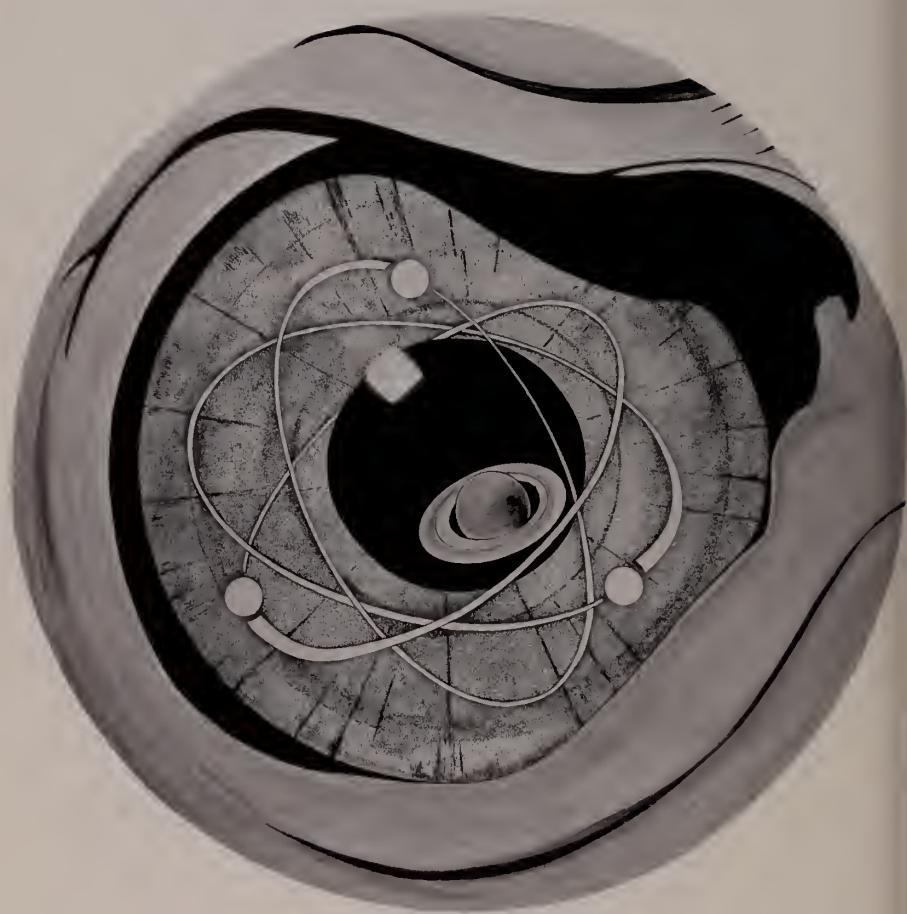
Was it spite that caused you  
to conquer it on paper,  
taming it to a tone,  
or a touch of bristle?

JANE AVRIL (La Mélinite à les Pariseans)  
who whirled in such fierce strut  
of skirt and flesh, stands frozen,  
leg extended to reveal the black stocking  
and the teasing passions of a love  
she could not yield.

La GALOUE and VALENTIN le DÉSOSSÉ  
no longer glide across the Moulin Rouge floors  
but stand bent into  
your lines of lithograph.

Even CHA-U-KAO who scorned to pause  
and pose for a portrait is seated  
now in the flood lighted halls  
of cultured museum walls.

Strange that your fascination  
of frenzy should have  
inflicted lameness, shaping statues,  
figures in a permanent frieze  
for art's sake.



Peter Muldoon, *As Above, So Below*, ink and tempera on paper, 14½" diameter

## Faces of Gravity

Today he has food.  
He gives the wind his hands,  
and rises.

Sun and weather,  
thump and fly.  
Today he fingers clouds,  
freed to cast  
shadow.

Arc and parabola  
thump and glide  
He is slave to no god.  
He verbs the silk air.

Wren and thrush,  
flames of this sky  
Today he touches  
sensuous trees, today  
he feathers wind.

Faces of gravity,  
storm and sigh.  
He drops by feel,  
he earths, and slowly.  
Mirror and window,  
enclosing eye

## Epileptic

Oracle fit to only crouch possessed,  
Mantis-like, you molt your consciousness.  
Dangling from the mistletoe  
The wings emerge off kilter.

Outfit self in bear-shirt, chance *berserker*.  
This brute ballet pirouettes the lumbering mind  
To a slumber deeper than caves.  
Thank God if your sleeping tongue is saved.

Twist thread around an iron nail  
And bury it. Christ's men will heat a church key,  
Jews lift their skulls at **ben nefillm's** frenzy.  
The holy well is somewhere north of myth.

Cross running water before sunrise.  
The barrel-divers at Niagara cry  
Too late to stop the foaming fall,  
Handkerchiefs crammed frantic at the mouth.

Between storms you are poured out  
Salt of coral mixed with salt of pearl,  
Given potsherds to scrape yourself withal.  
The shaven horn of rhino is your final pith.

Chosen one, you are no prophet;  
Have seen your greatness flicker  
In the strobing light's convulsive blither.  
You rail to decode the Morse of fallen angels.

And yet, the cryptic nerves that dance upon the surf  
Are yours. The brain must solve itself  
For every gnashing of inhuman teeth and nails.  
Seize you then the rhythm when it pulls.

# Rain

by Kathy Bearden

"I HAVE to see you." She walks quickly down the wet streets toward him. Toward his house. It is four in the morning and she has to see him.

Her face is dark until she moves into a circle made by the street light. It hits her in the eyes, so she shuts them and stumbles for a few moments until she is in the dark again.

She pictures him standing at his front door, waiting after her call. "I have to see you." He will stand a long time, ready for her, with a towel to dry the rain off her body. The surprise will be gone from his face; only a question, worry, and then sympathy; a look of love.

\* \* \*

His hands were rough. His hands rubbed her body like her father used to rub her chest when she had a cold. Her lover's mouth touched her everywhere. His tongue sucked her skin and made it warm. He kept his eyes closed all the time. She stared at him, watched him move from her stomach to her face.

\* \* \*

She begins to run. Her shoes are brown leather. The heels click on the sidewalk. Her legs are wet from the splash she makes every time her foot hits the cement.

She hated running as a child. It hurt her lungs when the gym teacher made her run around the school yard. She walked when she found bushes to hide behind, but he saw her and made her run around again. As she grew up, she had to run out of the house to get away; she had to run up and down the streets, always at night so no one could see her. In all her secret running she had learned how to do it fast, beautifully.

She will reach his house, a little out of breath. He will open the door, waiting with a towel. "Did you run?"

\* \* \*

She had run after him when they met. She wanted him the first time she saw him. She made herself beautiful for him, then he saw her. She made herself indifferent then because that was how he wanted her. The chase was long, but they both knew how it would end. She had to turn it around; he had to catch her.

"I acted like I didn't want you because I was afraid," he said.

"And I thought I was going to call you and scream into the phone, 'I have to see you.' It was all stupid. It made me very tired. We wasted so

much time."

She let him push her down gently, and warm her skin with his mouth.

"We have time."

\* \* \*

She wears a dress. It makes it easy to run. It will be easy for him to take off her. The dress is brown and plain. Her face is plain. She wears no makeup, so that her eyes look very large against her pale skin.

Her mother used to find her makeup hidden inside socks and underwear. She pulled her daughter into the bathroom and shoved it in her face. "What is this crap?" The silence angered her, and she made her daughter pour the liquids into the toilet, and break the mascara wand into little pieces, and watch while she flushed it all down.

When she went to college, she wore so much makeup that she left patches of orange and pink on her blouses and on the hands of the boys who stroked her face at midnight in the back seat of a car.

\* \* \*

His hair always got damp with sweat when he made love to her. A small piece of it in the very front worked itself slowly out of place until it hung in his eyes. But his eyes were closed. She could watch everything he did to her while his eyes were closed.

Sometimes he twisted his body into her. Sometimes he was violent. He scared her moving so fast. He forgot her. She knew that because she whispered to him and he didn't answer. He stopped kissing her. Just hips slamming together, the bed moving out from the wall with the violence. She wasn't caught up in his wanting. She could watch him twist and feel his wet skin and how he shuddered like dying and fell on top of her, trembling. Above his head, on the ceiling, she could see designs in the cracks that never changed but reminded her of different things on different nights.

\* \* \*

She has to stop running. Her lungs burn from the cold air. She is shivering in her wet dress. The brown one with buttons all down the front.

The day is coming on, with gray sky that leaves the buildings looking huge and black. If she wakes at this hour, she never knows if it is morning or evening. She doesn't bother to see where the sun is.

She is downtown near his house. He lives in the only nice house on a street of welfare houses and alleys. It has thick, small-paned windows and wooden floors he keeps bare and shiny for her. The house is huge and when they talk in the front hallway, or over the phone, their voices echo. It would have been cold if he was there. She would have hated it, and passed it on her walks without looking.

She tries not to look down the alleys at the men lying on the ground.



It bothers her that they are always there. She expects a garbage truck to pick them up like trash and throw them away somewhere. She was surprised when she saw them in New Orleans once. They looked like the same men, but they were alive and begging for her money. They pushed up against her and sucked on her coat with their stinking mouths. One touched her hair with his mouth and she threw her purse down and ran until her lungs burned and she was gasping and wheezing for breath.

\* \* \*

She liked his mouth the most. She never asked for kisses with words but pushed her face up against his until he opened his mouth to her.

\* \* \*

She walks past the mission house where the men are waking up to look for more liquor, maybe some food. She walks in the gutter when she passes the mission steps, to miss a man rolling down them to the sidewalk.

At thirteen she and her cousin raced up and down the hills in City Park. They began to run up one side and roll down the other like when she was a little girl. She rolled down and he followed her, going too fast so that he ran into her and they rolled down together. The ground leveled out and they still moved, slowly. She was on top, then his body on hers; their legs tangled together, pressing into each other. She pulled his thigh closer into her body and kept them rolling over in the grass.

\* \* \*

Her lover kissed her for an hour. First gently, lightly with his lips and tongue. He was teasing her, she wanted more. She pulled his head down and kissed him hard, sucked his mouth to hers. He moved up to her eyes and licked them closed, he ran his tongue along her cheekbones. She kept her eyes closed and began to moan softly, like a song deep in her throat.

He was teasing her all over with his hands and chest. He rubbed her breasts and then her stomach. He breathed into her neck, under her hair. She pressed him closer to her body to make him stay in one place, to complete the feeling.

He rose above her and balanced on his hands. She slammed herself up against him like an animal in a cage. She could scream, she said, and her own body was wet and trembled and she dug her short, hard nails into his back.

\* \* \*

The rain becomes a drizzle, the kind that could last for days. She is tired, and she wants him to open the door and take her into his warm arms. He will smell like tobacco, and a little like damp sheets, like sleep. He will walk her into the bedroom. "Did you run?"



"I had to see you."

\* \* \*

He held her. She liked that, that he wouldn't turn away from her while she was awake. He pushed the hair away from her face and kept his fingers there, lightly rubbing her forehead and eyes.

"When will you go home?" he said.

"He won't be up until nine this morning. He won't know."

"How can he sleep when you're gone? Can't he tell you're not there?"

"He never wakes up. He only needs me before he falls asleep. He really doesn't need me."

\* \* \*

She walks up the steps to her own house and lets herself in. She can hear the clock in the hall and the refrigerator humming. Everything else is quiet. She takes off her wet shoes in the hall and walks into the living room. She opens the drapes and looks out the window at the rain. It runs slowly down the glass like sweat. The sky is light gray. There will be no sun.

She goes down the hall to the bedroom. The door is still open. She stands inside the lightening room waiting for her eyes to focus. She walks over to the bed, unbuttons her dress slowly and lets it fall to the floor. She climbs in beside her husband and lays on her side, facing him. He doesn't wake up. He won't wake up for another hour. She knows he won't wake up even if she needs him to.

## Love Letter, 1944

Frauline,

You are the cathode of my existence  
The ground you walk, the anode's  
lightening jabs:  
electric flash that powers my heart

My heart drums a terrible cadence  
at the base of my skull,  
as I envision the dance of fire,  
the devastation of two lifetimes

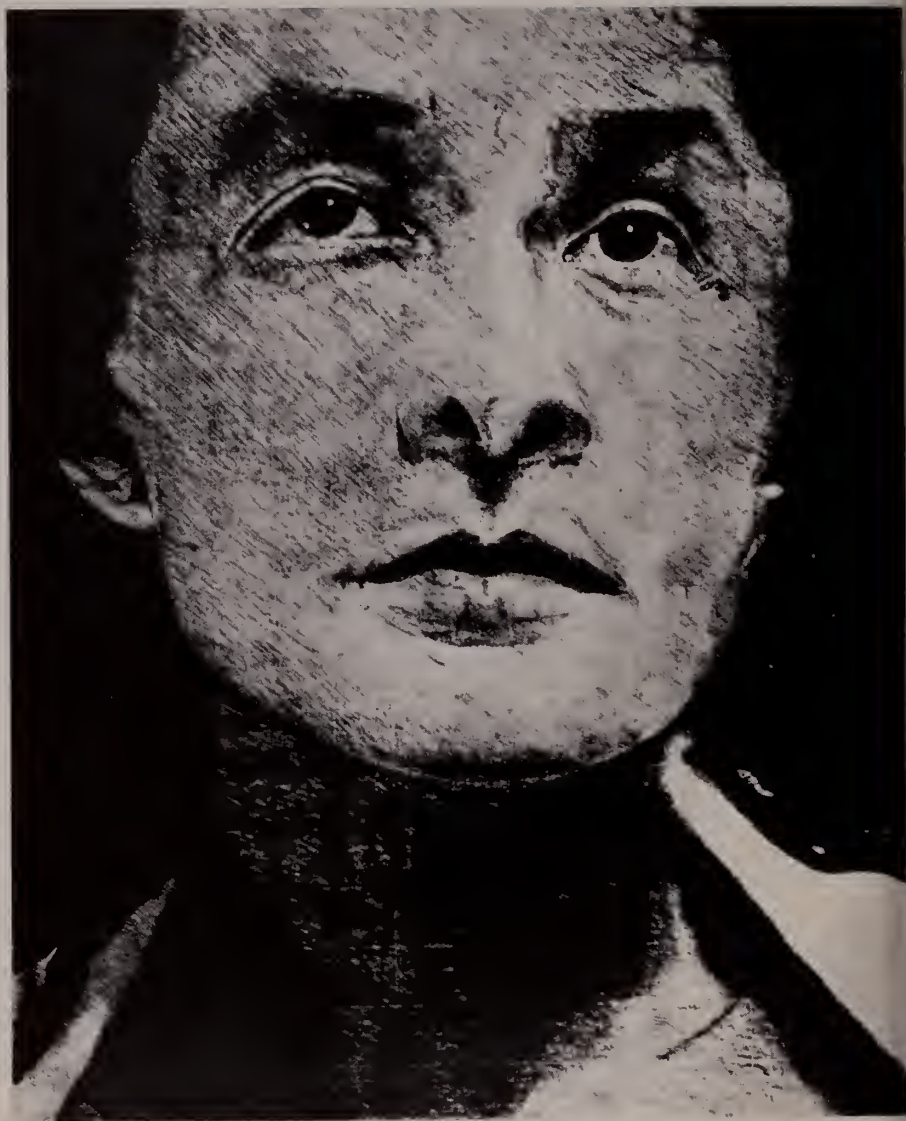
Two lifetimes ago: I remember the thoughts  
as I watched two lovers embrace and weep  
near the hole where I huddled  
Fear of consummation it was

It was then that I saw the same light,  
a surge of blind energy,  
as two souls sought each others'  
innermost reach

Reaching for the symbiance of love,  
their shapes enfolded; together  
they were more perfect than  
the eclipse of the sun

The sun wraps its tight corona,  
encircles my blinded eyes  
Incendiary bombs ignite nearby,

I wonder if you live



Heidi McLain, *O'Keeffe* by Stieglitz 1919; [pos], photo-lithograph of drawing, 15 7/8 x 18 3/4"

# The Restoration and Progression Of Absurdity In The *Eye Of Love*

The light in his eye  
is transvolutions of having been shocked  
in its fade-out too many times.  
A posture: It is nice with Beatrice;  
the emotional surfeit is always agreeable.

And her sisters: strings of christmas lights --

I am a string of lights,  
each bulb firing and dying  
in *succession*  
in a random tangle.  
My length is theoretically unlimited:  
    only weak matter fissures  
    to the extreme temperatures  
    of light and dark -- "Milton!"

"MILL-ton!  
Bring me my chair.  
I wish to take a turn  
in the garden."

"But it is night, Sir, the stragglers--"

"Then mind you watch!  
For I should be loath  
to meet the rudeness  
and swilled insolence of such late wassailers."

Jorges Luis Borges  
translated by Sandra Maley

## Elegy of the Impossible Memory

What I would not give for the memory  
Of an unpaved street with low adobe walls  
And of a tall horseman silhouetted against the dawn  
(A great frayed poncho)  
On one long day of the plains,  
An unmarked day.

What I would not give for the memory  
Of my mother contemplating morning  
On the ranch at Santa Irene,  
Before knowing her name would be Borges.

What I would not give for the memory  
of having fought at Cepeda  
And seen Estanislao del Campo  
Ride forward to meet the first bullet  
With an air of reckless defiance.

What I would not give for the memory  
Of a great wooden door to a secret cottage  
That my father opened every night  
Before losing himself in sleep  
And opened for the last time  
On the Fourteenth of February, 1938.

What I would not give for the memory  
Of Hengist's long ships  
Setting sail from the sands of Denmark  
To conquer an island  
Not yet called England.

What I would not give for the memory  
(I once had and lost)  
Of a golden canvas by Turner,  
Vast as music.

What I would not give for the memory  
Of having listened to the man Socrates  
Who, on the evening of the hemlock,  
Calmly examined the question  
Of immortality,

Balancing myth and logic,  
While blue death rose coldly  
From his feet, already numb.

What I would not give for the memory  
That you might have said you loved me  
And of not having slept until dawn,  
Delivered and serene.

I think about George Hevener  
every time I pour syrup on my  
pancakes. George owns a maple  
sugar camp down in Monterey,  
Virginia-- started sugaring  
with his daddy over seventy  
years ago. George says, "in  
the old days you helped your  
neighbor to get your sweet-  
ness." Things have changed.  
But not George. He still waits  
for the full moon to perch  
on an oak branch outside his  
kitchen window before he taps  
his trees--"the holes heal  
over better." Well, I don't  
question that, no sir, not me.



Randall Roberts, *Baltimore 1977*, photograph, 8 5/8 x 5 6/8



# Of Another Breed

by James M. Clash

I BELIEVE I first met him in the fourth grade. He was not so articulate then. In fact, he had to struggle to get B's in school so his parents would not beat him. He became a very hard worker at a very early age and by the time he was in Junior High his B's had become A's and there were not so many marks on him when we took a shower in gym class. His parents became proud of him. They were so proud that one night they took him out to dinner. I remember it. He was all dressed up in a suit that was too big for him and it made him look ridiculous. His parents thought it fit nicely though, and his mother had been very specific about the measurements when she had ordered it. "It's for my son, Stephen. He pulled straight A's this quarter," she told the tailor. The tailor had just looked at her and asked about the size of the cuffs.

In High School Stephen Bradley was valedictorian, captain of the math team, and nominated to the National Honor Society. There were other awards and titles, but I cannot remember them. You could say he did quite well academically. He did not do well with the girls, though. I can understand that. It was not that he was a bad looking guy, it was just that he did not have the time. One time he brought a nice girl home to meet his parents and they were very nasty to her. I do not remember him ever bringing home another girl.

Upon graduation from High School, Stephen went out of state to Princeton. I did not see him much then because I applied to the state university and spent my four years there. Sometimes I would see him on breaks or read about him in the local papers, though. He did as well or better at Princeton than he had done in High School. At the end of his senior year there he had accumulated a solid 4.0 average. That is very hard to do at Princeton. The competition is very stiff there. We received an invitation to his graduation in early May, after we had read about it in the papers.

Since my parents and the Bradleys' were close, we made the trip up to New Jersey to watch Stephen graduate. It was a nice May morning and the birds were chirping and you could smell the early morning dew from the grass. With the commencement exercises to begin at eleven, we all strolled over to a small coffee shop beforehand, to have some breakfast. Stephen could not be with us because he was too busy preparing speeches and what not.

"It's a fine morning," Stephen's mother observed.

"You couldn't ask for nicer weather," my mother said. She was very cheerful.

We were all seated at a large round table. The waiter came over and

handed us menus. I looked across the table at Mr. Bradley. He looked fine. Mrs. Bradley was seated next to him. She looked fine, too, except her dress was a bit noisy.

"MY LORD, isn't this exciting?" Mrs. Bradley beamed.

"Yes, it sure is," I answered politely. I did not think anything was exciting about it, though. I hadn't even wanted to come in the first place but my parents said how would that look and I said I didn't know and they pleaded and rather than cause a scene, I gave in.

The waiter brought his pad over and asked for our orders. My mother took pancakes and sausages. So did Stephen's mother. In fact they all did, except me. I ordered bacon and eggs.

"We're so proud of Stephen," Mrs. Bradley said.

"He sure has done well."

Our orders came. Everyone was hungry. The food went down between bits of conversation. The eggs tasted good. Eating was nice to take your mind off things and keep talk to a minimum.

"Don, how are you doing this semester?" Mrs. Bradley was looking at me when she said this.

"All right," I said.

"What kind of grades do you expect?"

"Nothing fancy."

"How's the job with the school newspaper?"

"It's OK."

Mrs. Bradley liked to talk with her mouth full. The others had better manners.

"Have you any of your short stories published yet?"

"No," I said.

"How many have you written now?" with the mouth full.

"Seven."

"Why don't you write one about Stephen? I'm sure that would make an interesting one. You could probably get that one published."

I did not answer.

"Stephen's a story in himself."

First I looked at my mother. Then I looked at my old man. Then I got up and left the table, my face burning. I could write one about Stephen all right. It would not be what Mrs. Bradley expected. I felt my face cooling as I walked along. To hell with them. Everything was still all right. I hadn't said anything. I would just tell them I suddenly didn't feel so good. They would understand.

An hour later I went back to the coffee shop. They had just left and the waiter was clearing off the table. I saw him scrape my half-eaten eggs into the trash can. I asked if there was any message left for me, but he said no. He was very polite. I looked at my watch. It was a quarter to eleven. I had not realized it was that late. I had better get moving if I was to catch the ceremony.

THREE HOURS later I was sitting in a room with Stephen Bradley. The ceremony was over and it had all come off quite splendidly. Stephen

was lying on the bottom bunk, near the suitcase he had been packing. I was sitting in a chair near the wall, looking out of the fourth story window of a Princeton dorm.

"You handled yourself quite well up there," I said.

"It went all right."

"How does it feel?"

"I don't know."

Stephen did not seem too excited. He was looking at the pillow on the bed.

"Does it feel good?"

"It's not what I expected."

"What the hell's the matter with you?"

Stephen looked at me. "Don, I think I'm in love."

I was quiet.

"I don't know what to do about it though. I've never been in love before." He was fumbling with his fingers in an awkward way.

"It's not so bad."

"I don't think you understand."

I was quiet.

"It's not the same for me."

"Sure it is," I said. "Everyone thinks it's different when it concerns them, especially when it's their first time."

"But it is different."

"No," I laughed. "It's not different. It's just your first time."

"Is it all right, being in love I mean?"

I laughed out loud. Here was a 4.0 Princeton graduate asking me about love. His parents had really done a job on him. I wondered if his mother could have pictured this conversation. I do not believe she could have.

"Where did you meet her?" I asked.

Stephen sat silent.

"You're acting awfully peculiar."

"You don't understand."

"Sure I do."

"No, you don't."

"No, I guess I don't. I don't have a 4.0 average at Princeton. You 4.0ers are on your own level, aren't you?"

"Cut it with that business. That's not it at all. You know that's not it."

Stephen got up from the bed and walked over to the window. It was a real nice day and you could see a long way from the fourth story. You could see the cars on the highways and the flat plains of New Jersey and the new graduates walking with their suitcases looking especially tall.

"It's not about that at all," he said again, looking out of the window.

"What the hell's it about then?" I asked, a little annoyed.

"It—" but he did not continue. "What time is it?"

I looked at my watch. "Two thirty," I said.

"We'd better get going. We have to meet everyone shortly."

"We've got five minutes."

"I think we'd better get going."

"We've got five."

"I don't want to talk about it anymore."

"I'd like to hear about it."

"You laughed."

"I wasn't laughing at you."

Stephen shifted his feet. "You won't understand," he said in a low voice. Then he walked over to his dresser, picked up his wallet and removed a picture from a thin, plastic holder. He shook his head and handed the picture to me. We both looked at it.

"There, I told you you wouldn't understand."

I turned the picture over and read the writing on the back. It was difficult to read and after I had read it I wished I hadn't. My stomach felt a bit queasy and I was glad I had been sitting down. I handed the picture of his boyfriend back to him. We both sat quiet for a while.

"We'd better get going," Stephen finally said.

I just looked at him and nodded my head.

Outside it was nice in the sun. We were walking toward the coffee shop where we were supposed to meet everyone. Several people stopped us along the way, congratulating Stephen. I found myself thinking. It was not a nice thing to think about.

"You wouldn't mention this to my parents?"

"No."

"They wouldn't understand."

"No, they wouldn't."

"It's a hell of a thing."

"It sure is."

"I can't explain about it."

"You don't have to."

"He's a fine grade point average."

"Is he?"

"You mean, 'Does he.'"

"Yeah, does he."

"He's awfully well mannered."

"Does he talk with his mouth full?" I said in a rather low voice, looking up ahead, up toward the coffee shop, where everything Stephen believed in lay curled up and waiting.

## The Heroic Poet

And how about that soft-spoken painter  
what visions his canvas has  
and he a face like a prophet  
fit for Salome's plate.

He looks at all your blab  
those lines of heroic flapdoodle  
and honest guy that he is  
believes it all  
that all its virtue is pumped  
through your veins.

But that was yesterday. Now a sunk look  
comes on his face,  
painful surprise to find  
a clean shirt separates you  
from the bum down on the corner.

## Words to a Fellow Traveler

To walk in the arc  
of a sparrow's fall,  
to brush the sun from new leaves,  
to reflect the beauty  
of a few other pilgrims  
and be loved for it,  
then there is no need  
for a golden compass:  
we have all that went before  
within.





Lynda Del Castillo, *untitled*, photograph, 7½ x 10 11/16"

## Saint-Gaudens' Memorial to M.H. Adams

Rising from the mystery of heavy cloth  
An arm, and finger below the long curl;  
The lips, mute,  
In unitate;  
The eyes, tideless bays,  
In veritate;  
The face, unscalable:  
    Voca me cum benedictis,  
    Preces meae non sunt dignae.  
Within the flowing sheet  
The arm has a twin,  
The vessels carry life.  
She sits above the marble floor;  
Berries of the grove abound.

In the grotto, evergreen,  
The wonder:  
Of the living-of the dead.

A sky of half-light darkening  
Brushes hard the sopping ice;  
A high neutral sky  
Decays deep down  
Where the winter hurls on  
By the quiet tuft of holly greens;  
Along the gates  
The wooden summer porches empty  
Their lasting aged  
Children of the lately dead,  
Wind aches their ashy heads.  
On the crowed hill they appear  
Their hands entwined  
In a wiry clasp of branches:  
Blood members in  
The darkest phase of love.

Remote in the garden,  
The peace,  
The great metal of captured peace.  
A few berries on the burnished knee.



## True Art (For Eric Eckman)

If I was to blow my nose  
On a piece of typing paper  
Would that be a poem?

It would come from inside of me.  
It would be natural.  
It would appeal to the senses.

A major breakthrough!  
True Art!

Hut-chew! Hut-chew!  
There's one, there's two,  
I never knew  
About this nose poetry,  
Did you?

If I had known  
That I had blown  
A half-a-grocery bag full of poems,  
I never would have thrown  
Them away.

Imagine: a pound of poems  
From one common cold.

The masterpieces I blew no longer exist;  
I threw them away, I'm a true artist.

## Visiting the Family

It is only five minutes before dinner  
when you arrive.

Only five minutes,  
and you are still dirty.

Mother stands in the door,  
holding a garland of plastic zinnias.  
She smiles  
a bent-over Picasso smile  
and says there will be  
curdled milk and moldy cheese for dinner.  
It will be ready in five minutes  
Please try to wash up.

Father smokes a frankfurter  
and invites you to cut yourself  
on the edge of his beer can.  
If only you had not messed up,  
you could have made  
something of yourself.  
This, of course,  
is a true remark.

Your sisters are giving each other  
hair cuts on the back porch.  
The dogs sing through the tall grass  
in the back yard.  
The neighbors are charting the courses  
of strange satellites  
that have been seen over the interstate highway.

You run up the stairs,  
right to the top of the house  
where the air cramps against itself.  
You switch on the radio  
and crawl under the bed,  
sucking up dust  
and swearing that you'll never  
let yourself come back.

## Purgatory

A friend prepared for  
surgery found her blood  
count down. Doctors  
paused and peered

in pans, like oracles.  
They emptied her, filled  
her with milky chalk,  
filmed a careless smear.

No one could read it right.  
Insufficient purging? Or  
cancer set to claw its  
way across her days and

nights? Technicians  
took clarifying pictures.  
She lay shaken. Doctors  
read the x-ray: Negative.

After all, I took her  
home, helped her up the  
steps. We unpacked three  
weeks of books, plants

and bed clothes and five  
china cherubs turning  
into a somersault. She  
pet the cat and cried.



Shirley Dow, *untitled*, lithograph, 8 x 10"

## Cycle Rewinding

In the world of reverse time,  
man would be seen as being  
born out of the earth  
and eaten by his mother.

Rodney Collins

There is a trace of scream in the air,  
He gives up his first breath  
To the incandescent room.  
Memory becomes prehistoric,  
His calendar of days thumbs back  
Like a repetition of checkmarks, erasing  
The proof of their existence.  
The way is unclear,  
The eyes unbelieving  
Watch the light disappear,  
Shut for good to enter the greater  
Light of liquid warmth,  
Plush and reliable.  
He lives this moment; somewhere before  
Full and open like moons  
A woman's thighs await  
The intake of limbs,  
Her sacred meal, her unasked for  
Duty to swallow wholly this life,  
To head-last deliver him unto herself.

She ingests the body,  
Tunnels him slow  
To the nest of her natural work  
And shrinks him system by system,  
Vessel, nerve, bone.  
His spheroid skull stalls in orbit,  
Tissue by tissue shedding all form,  
Starving himself from a life of blood.  
The cells gather, merge, and refuse  
Back and back into one  
Who floats back to the chosen source.  
His last atoms of identity depart:  
Something stiff and demanding  
Siphens into itself  
All seeds of future possibility  
Like an implosion of paradise.  
There is a violent, soothing rocking  
Dwindling down like flame inhaled.  
A new man is forgetting his instinct,  
Goes soft with fantasy.  
From the unlit room  
He draws cloth about his body  
And leaves masked,  
                  intact yet incomplete.

# He and She

by James Crisci

SO THIS is how it goes, I guess, when the onceuponatime becomes nowadays:

He was a budding Marxist sprouting and spouting *Das Kapita* and seeking out exploitation in its every form and making sure everybody knew about it.

She was a budding sort too, really into growing plants and green things and all the good natural things from the earth like macrame and wheat germ.

He and She lived in the same apartment building.

But they never met until one day. This is the onceuponatime I mentioned earlier.

He told She all about the dictatorship of the proletariat.

She told He all about the secret life of her fuchsia.

Neither listened very well.

He left She's apartment. "She really understands me," He probably sighed.

She closed the door behind He. "He really understands me," She probably sighed.

So it was love.

Obviously.

Probably.

He and She got married, too.

So now He is a full-time worker of the world at a gas station.

So now She sells plastic flowers for centerpieces at a drug store.

Plastic flowers do not have a secret life.

Their shelf life, however, is unlimited.



## Taipei

You wrote that I ought to be sent jet  
beads, blue slippers embroidered  
with small roses.  
It was my soul you loved.

What you sent me: a soapstone fish  
with a dot of an eye, a jade heart  
on a cheap string, I still remember and keep,  
unable somehow to throw them away.

Perhaps you blessed them, charged me  
not to neglect your thoughtfulness,  
the sandalwood beads of a rosary  
that cannot scent when no one tells it.

I think of your prayer for the hungry dead,  
the prayer-wheels colored like paper carnival fans  
turning in the wind where there are white mountains.

On this street sits the man  
with the face divided half in beauty,  
half with burns.  
Why did you stop without coming to my door?

These stones, black tears, I cannot send you.  
Nor these silver birds perched among  
the kimono's threaded trees.

We are parted. There is a dull clacking  
of wooden shutters, wooden shoes.  
A lantern bobbles before me in the night streets.  
Is it raining? The light of the Blind One has gone out.

## Beast

It is so tender, this being, that if he should  
Brush it with a rough cloth it would cry out  
And call him a beast.

And so he must brush it,  
There! And again!

So: Beast, it says to him,  
Beast, it keeps saying,  
Beast, it is whispering,  
Beast, Beast.

What should he do?

He must be tender with it, this being,  
Lest it beast him up.



Shea Liefer, *untitled*, ink and wash drawing, 13 7/8 x 10 6/8"

**Paul A. Trimble**

the multi monster  
takes aim  
there is no ear in the pattern of words  
no thought to entertain  
but of the random point of light  
touching the random point of dark

ink caverns grow through the fountain  
of light passing darkness spreads  
each color across the rollers  
amorphous silence dripping  
turns  
catches phrases  
    glimpsed  
form rollers twist the image  
circular  
passes contact

water etches the non image area  
where words are red islands  
rising out of the aluminium plane  
an ocean breeze whispers  
blank regions  
submerged  
under the acidic solution  
    turning

the sheets float in a vacuum breeze  
blown sideways back  
sucked up are caught by  
rollers conveyered  
to alloy teeth run with chains  
along cylinders  
then drop and shift into a stack

ink water paper  
these are the elements of literature  
kept in such delicate balance  
    a language  
of pure form  
rushing within each letter

when anyone speaks to me of magic  
about being moved by words to awareness  
I show them the office of creation  
the press

## The Turning Disease

She, now, alights daintily,  
Slips in easily,  
Deposits her cargo, fertile,  
The product of her love-life;  
And, freed for now,  
This duty done,  
She dances on out  
Into the flesh-temperated air that  
Wiggles up into the ochrous morning sky.

He, uninformed as yet,  
Goes on grazing,  
Breaking fast on the graygreen grass,  
Among the army of others--  
Horn-helmeted, stripe-uniformed,  
All the same  
Except for fortune.  
They notice nothing.

But  
What is his first reaction to this  
Thing in his ear?  
Its first larval nip at his tissue?  
The turn of an oval eye in that direction?  
The flick of that external ear  
That failed to flick that one time?  
Is it an itch?  
A tickle, exquisite but brief?  
A tiny sound, but *very* close?  
Here is sensitivity,  
Awareness, knowledge perhaps,  
Where there was none.

For the first time,  
He turns away from his womb-ear,  
As you would recoil from a cuff,  
As I would jerk back from a slug,  
As we would shriek  
From an auger bit twisting deep.  
And, as he whirls away from his hysterical ear,  
The herd grazes off,  
Leaving him there

To turn,  
To turn,  
To turn,  
In laborious surrogate pregnancy,  
To cleave the earth with his hooves,  
To cut a circle in the sod,  
A marker.

It is the turning disease.  
It takes some time.

Later, he has luck:  
He welcomes the jackals.  
The quick jaws give pleasure.  
He lays with them.  
They lunch on his haunches,  
Sup on his long bones.  
And, as the earth turns,  
With the late sun glinting crimson  
On new graceful lace,  
She emerges  
From the skull hole,  
Scents something,  
And waltzes off.

## Excerpts from the Memoirs of God's Secretary

...and Mary, take a memo. Tell those Earthlings I will not tolerate anymore of their nonsense. If they do not stop thrusting rockets across the vast waters, I will piece the Continents back together and then they can really antagonize each other.

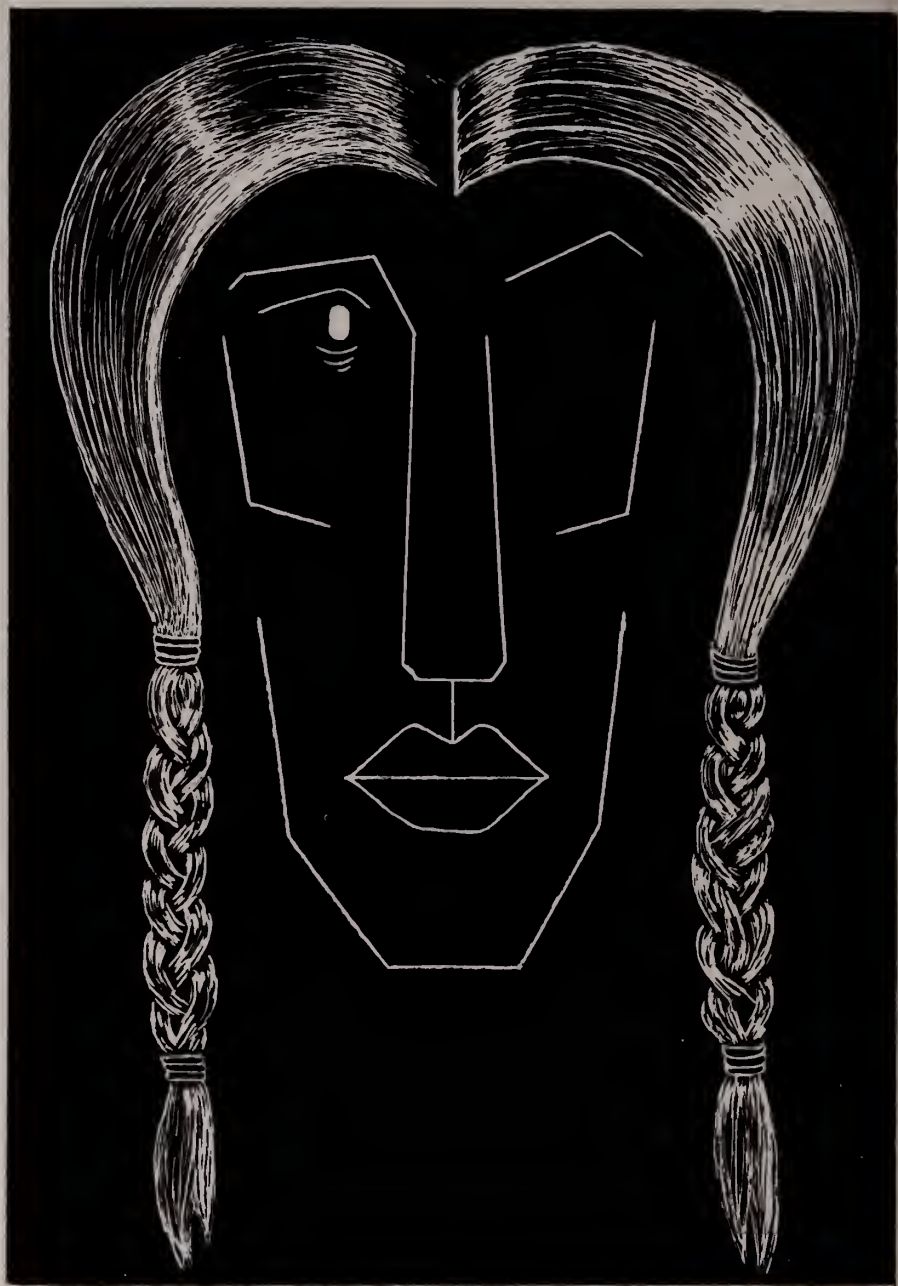
He rubs his brow, "I'll try to be fair, tell them they get one more warning and then I'll annihilate the lot of them.  
(a quake shook the Earth as a message shot to Earth.)

Because Man believed in God's great mercy, they adjusted their sights and aimed toward Heavens to communicate to him.

So as God smiles down on Mankind, one of those rocks jabs him in the eye and he loses sight of his high position. "I knew it wouldn't be long before they'd do one more..."

End of memo

**Cathy London**



Grace Liddy, *untitled*, drawing on scratchboard



# Right of Passage

by Gladys Sloane

THE DOOR; why hadn't she noticed it before? It was only half-hidden by the bushes that bordered the back wall of the garden. It must be visible even from the French windows of the Home-place. Perhaps she hadn't seen it because she had never been alone in the garden, as indeed, until today, she had not been alone in the Home-place nor anywhere else. In all her life there had seldom been a moment when she wasn't surrounded by others; playing, laughing Persons or gentle, smiling, serene Marthas. Even at night she had shared her sleeping quarters; in childhood with Sib-Persons, then with Mate. Life had always been music and light and companionship; familiar and dependable: today was silence and mist and solitude; alien and tenuous.

This morning when she awoke Mate had not been in the bed beside her as he had been every morning for the past twenty years, ever since her Selection, except, of course, during the short periods when the children were born. He had not come into the bathroom when she bathed, nor had there been any sign of him in the robing-room when she dressed in the smock and sandals that had been laid out for her.

The clothing had not been the bright, soft garments she was used to. The sandals, thick and coarse, hurt her feet. The smock, a gray one, was almost the color of the formless robes the Marthas wore and she had not wanted to put it on. But there was nothing else to do. Last evening's filmy crimson gown had been taken from the robing-room during the night, as usual. So she wore the gray.

She had not really been concerned that the morning had begun in such an unusual fashion: she did not know how to worry. The Marthas were always nearby, watchful and caring. Yet, the Child-Martha had not brought the three children in to say Good Morning to her before she went downstairs to breakfast. And the House-Martha had not been in the kitchen either, although there had been food on a warming tray at the usual place at the table.

As she began to eat (the toast was dry, the coffee strangely bitter) she reached for the Da-genda. Its holder near the vase on the center of the table was empty. That the flowers in the vase were wilted she gave only a passing thought. Without the Da-genda she would have to plan the day for herself. She had never done that before. She wondered what she would do to fill the time until lunch. Perhaps I'll play tennis, she thought. Almost simultaneously, unease rippled her stomach and a foreign concept invaded her mind.

"Tennis? Silly game. Clop...clop; clop...clop; serve and return the fuzzy ball. Why? For what purpose?" She squeezed her eyes shut and



forced the unwelcome idea from her mind.

The Pre-natorium, yes, she would go to the Pre-natorium; there were always lots of Persons there, and laughter and games. Then she remembered that she no longer held a Fecund-card and hadn't for nearly five years, not since Gamma had been born. The Mid-Marthas would turn her away, kindly but firmly. It didn't really matter--the realization came suddenly--she no longer felt a kinship with the Waiting-ones. Had she ever really waited as happily as they did? Perhaps with Alpha: all Alpha-waiters were ridiculously giddy in their waiting. And for what? Was it such a great thing to wake one morning, no longer swollen and ungainly, no longer in the Pre-natorium but in the House of New Life; to have a small body to cuddle and feed and watch grow until it began to notice, to smile, to respond; then to be sent back to the Home-place, accompanied by a Child-Martha, who would not let you touch or even see the child again except to greet it in the morning and to kiss it goodnight at bedtime?

'What's wrong with me?' she thought. I never felt like this before. Child-Marthas always care for the children and the children love them. She remembered the comfortable softness of her own Child-Martha. No Person would want a child to interrupt the even tenor of her life.

Should she go to the pool or the Cine-club? Still undecided, she finished her coffee and walked aimlessly through the open French windows into the garden. She shivered in the unaccustomed chill. She could not remember the garden being so cold or looking so drab. Petals fell from the overblown red and yellow roses onto the uneven brick walkway. The fountain in the middle of the gardens splashed wearily against the gray stones in the chipped catch-basin: surely the stones had been pearly yesterday and the basin had been smooth. The concrete benches near the fountain were damp under the dull sky. A spider was busily weaving a web in the axilla of a weather-worn cherub who sighted along his bow, just after the moment of release, as if seeking the spent arrow in the bedraggled marigold bed.

She sighed. Then, in answer to some scarcely perceived prickle of urgency she walked past the roses, past the fountain, past the cherub and the marigold bed to the shrub-skirted wall beyond. And there she found the door.

She stared at the door and she hated it. It was a culmination of all the perplexities of the morning. It was an unknown quantity in a world that had never held anything but familiar pleasure and immediate gratification. She felt helpless. She wanted to turn back to the garden, to forget the door. But, in an instant of rare decision, she lifted the latch, pushed open the door, and stepped over the threshold.

The sand was deep and filled her sandals as she stumbled on the shifting grains. Overhead the sun was hot and the heat of it pressed upon her as if it had mass as well as energy. White sand--a bare, deceptively smooth beach--glared before her and, in the distance, harsh sunlight glittered on the black waters of a roily bay. She shuddered and

turned back to the door in the wall. There was no door: there was no wall. There was sand: mounds of sand, mountains of sand--each succeeding dune higher than the last--stretched to the horizon and the empty sky.

Bewildered, she turned back to the bay, then completed the circle to stare again at the barren hills where the wall should have been. And once more she turned--slowly, her shoes heavy, nearly anchored yet sliding in the unstable sand. There was nothing but the sand and the sky and the beating sun. And the bay.

A gust of air blew from the bay and lifted the skirt of her gray dress. Automatically she held down the billowing fabric. 'How ugly this dress is,' she thought. 'How ugly I am.' Emotions never experienced in all her years with the Marthas; emotions she could not name--despair, loneliness, uselessness--erased the security and confidence of a lifetime. She sank to the sand and it burned her bare legs and arms. The sun beat down on her and the wind rasped her skin.

For an age she lay on the sand, head cradled in her arms, eyes tightly closed. Then she slowly raised her head and opened her eyes. Can't lie here and bake, she thought, the wind will pulverize me into dust. When she tried to rise, her body did not respond as she remembered it always had before. Laboriously she drew her legs under her until she was on her hands and knees; then, raising one knee, she pushed on it with one hand and climbed her own body until she was erect. She stood facing the bay. The water at least would be cool. She dragged herself toward it.

The water was dark and turbid and it was cool where it licked her feet. She waded into it, feeling it caress her thighs, her belly, her breasts, until she was neck-deep. How easy, she thought, to walk a few steps farther and give myself to the water.

A wavelet slapped her chin and splashed bitterness into her mouth and her nose. She sputtered and choked. "No!" she screamed. "No, not yet!" and she turned back to the shore.

For a long while she lay sobbing on the damp packed sand near the water's edge. When she finally sat, she clasped her arms around her drawn-up knees and stared at the ever-changing, never-changing surface of the bay. There was something on the other side: there must be. There had to be more than sand and sun and sea and sky. Resolutely, she removed her sandals and threw them far out over the water. She heard the plops and watched the splashes as the shoes hit and sank into the opaque liquid.

It was easier walking without the impeding sandals. The sand slid silkily off her bare feet. She stayed near enough to the water to feel its coolness, yet far enough away to be out of the reach of the surf. She never looked back, only forward to where she imagined she could see a definite curve in the shoreline. Once she stopped and approached the water. A small gray creature fluttered and squawked where the waves lapped the sand. It was a young gull, its feet caught in an undulating

tangle of seaweed. Though the bird beat her with its wings and pecked at her hands, she carefully unwrapped the slimy green from its webbed feet. It screamed, rising free, and was gone. Then she plodded on until darkness came; until she was near the bend in the beach. She knelt and scooped a concavity in the sand. She would sleep in that small shelter and, when she awoke, she would reach the other side.

The gray-robed figures watched her as she slept.

"She has opened the door."

"She has rejected the waters."

"She has cast off the sandals."

"She has freed the gull."

"She has hollowed the sand."

"The Gateway will open to her."

"Come, let us prepare to welcome our new sister."

Mary-Martha smiled in her sleep.



Randall Roberts, *untitled*, photograph, 5 7/16 x 12"

## I Am

I stretch out from this pleasure bed  
fleshed & young,

your good taste fresh on my tongue.

Where are you this moment?

Late last night when you had gone,  
curled in a cloth, loose & warm,

I turned & dove to the center of my mind.

There in the window a floating moon  
laps the leaves.

I remember my life as a lotus seed,  
how I rose & bloomed.

I remember a tomb where I slept, so safe,  
the way your pale fingers  
would sift.

Touch this, and this  
my archeologist.

How did you find me here?

Now we meet again, in this place,  
this time.

Will it always be so?

Nothing is finished. Nothing is without hope.

Love is so easy. Wind & weeds.  
I go about my days. Stars  
identify my waist,  
my knee.

Earth still bears me  
with all my burden of praise.

## Poetry Four

First come the infants lurch mumble

(The temperance ladies say "They are drunk,"  
and look down their long pink black brown noses.

The temperance ladies pin cameos to their garden smocks  
and spread compost in Eden.)

followed by chicks and dudes,  
the elegant ones who are coming down to town etc.  
dogs barking, velvet gowns

(Their grandfathers drank wusquebaugh  
a social tradition.  
The china flew.)

followed by astral aspirants  
celestial peyote-bud pickers  
concentrators meditators  
inhalators

is not this a logical progression from the dust of the word to the juice of  
the grape  
to the sprout of the cacti to snow altitudes to cloud gurus?

still they come  
go crawling hiking  
leaping dancing  
oh Beatrice, oh Dante

we are half-way home but never thought to see it in our lifetime

Lay me back baby lay me  
all the way baaaaaackckckckck

followed by wordpersons  
who don't need no guitar  
no sitar  
no zither  
oh pure word, word music

which brings us back climbing to crawl among words high on words  
in Eden.

## Anomie

The faces on the clocks  
Have all turned away.  
The cats are howling  
At the moon  
And dogs chew wood  
For lack of bones.  
Children play with matches  
To amuse themselves  
While their parents  
Sew buttons on for eyes  
And argue over who should  
have the green thread.  
Businessmen sit in  
Bleached offices  
Playing jacks  
Weeping for their mothers--  
Their wives wait at home  
Polishing the fruit.





Jim Wilson, *Blanche*, etching, 6 7/8 x 8 7/8"

## The Last Word on Literary Magazines

Let ME tell YOU something  
About literary magazines.  
They are, without exception,  
Run by self-important snobs,  
And would-be poets.  
Everybody knows that there  
Are no objective standards  
For judging works of art.  
So where do you get off  
Telling people that their  
Stuff is no damned good?  
Who died and made you  
Chief of staff?

By the way,  
I'm sending you, under separate cover,  
Three of my recent poems.  
Do you think you could squeeze  
Them into your magazine?  
Couldn't you possibly, pretty please,  
Do that? They're real short.  
Aw, come on. Will you?  
Huh?

# Contributors

• **Steven Barnes** is a senior English major at UMCP. • **Kathy Bearden** is majoring in English at UMCP. • **Virginia Clark** is a graduate student at UMCP. • **James M. Clash** is editor of *CALVERT* and majors in English at UMCP. • **James Crisci** has appeared in previous issues of *CALVERT*. He is an undergraduate at UMCP. • **Crispin** is a senior English major at UMCP. He also edits *THE MAG*. • **Lynda Del Castillo** is a senior Photojournalism major at UMCP. • **Joy Dineen** is a special student at UMCP. • **David Dobler** frequents J.R. Salamanca's prose workshops. • **Shirley Dow** is a Maryland artist who will return to her studies at Pratt Institute next year. • **Warren Early** is a sophomore Psychology major at UMCP. • **Patricia Gayet** is an area poet, and Founder of *SIBYL CHILD*. • **David Gellner** is a young New York City poet. • **Michael Gentile** is a junior Philosophy major at UMCP and has some interesting ideas about literary magazines. • **William Gorski** is poetry editor of *CALVERT* and majors in English at UMCP. • **David Hall** is a graduate student at UMCP and managing editor of *CALVERT*. • **Lucia Keuroglian** majors in English at UMCP. • **Shea Lelfer** is a painter and studies fine arts at UMCP. • **Grace Liddy** is a freshman in computer science at UMCP. • **Cathy London** is a senior English major and coordinator for *WRITERS HERE AND NOW* at UMCP. • **Saundra Maley** is a graduate teaching assistant at UMCP. • **Mary Ann McFadden** is a former UMCP student now residing in California. • **Heldi McLain** is a senior in studio art at UMCP and directs both the West Gallery and the Capital Gallery. • **Marilyn Mell** is a graduate student teaching assistant at UMCP. • **Peter Muldoon** is an art student at Montgomery College. • **Jane O'Callaghan** is an undergraduate student at UMCP. • **Sumie Putman** is a senior in studio art at UMCP. • **Ruthellen Quillen** is a creative writing instructor at UMCP and working towards her Doctorate. • **Randall Roberts** is photography editor for the *DIAMONDBACK* and a senior at UMCP. • **Gladys Sloane** is the mother of five children and frequents UMCP creative writing classes. • **Michael Sobsey** is an English undergraduate at UMCP. • **Paul A. Trimble** is a poet, printer, and editor, presently instructing in experimental offset lithography at Writers' Center, Glen Echo, Md. • **Robert Trumbule** is a junior Botany major at UMCP. • **Matthew Westbrook** is a sophomore English major at UMCP. • **Reed Whittemore** is a well known poet and well liked teacher at UMCP. • **Jim Wilson** is a senior in Art Education at UMCP. • **Hastings Wyman, Jr.** is a Washington resident working for the Trade Association. • **Joe Yuhas** is a recent UMCP graduate working at the Food Co-op. • **Mark Zeender** is a sophomore English major at UMCP.

